



# Rhode Island Department of Health

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## **Rhode Island Foundation and United Way, Microsoft Providing Support to Rhode Islanders**

*Two additional cases of COVID-19 in Rhode Island*

Governor Gina M. Raimondo and Director of Health Nicole Alexander-Scott, MD, MPH today announced that several local and national organizations are offering free services to Rhode Islanders during the coronavirus public health crisis.

The [Rhode Island Foundation](#) and [United Way of Rhode Island](#) have launched a fund to support local nonprofit organizations on the front line of COVID-19 response efforts. The two organizations jointly established the COVID-19 Response Fund, quickly raising more than \$1.5 million in initial contributions from individual and corporate donors. Gifts to the fund, in any amount, can be made with Rhode Island Foundation or United Way of Rhode Island. The two organizations will work jointly to provide financial support for organizations on the front lines of the COVID-19 response who are working to serve vulnerable Rhode Islanders.

Microsoft has agreed to provide their Office 365 E1 program for free for six months to all employers. The Office 365 E1 program includes web-based Microsoft Office applications, resources to support telecommuting such as meetings and instant messaging, as well as remote file sharing. Microsoft is offering this service nationally only to businesses managed by a Microsoft account rep that haven't activated other Microsoft Office 365 trials in the past. But for Rhode Island, Microsoft has agreed to lift all restrictions on this offering. Microsoft is also offering a free online version of Office with email, video conferencing, customized hub for class teamwork with Microsoft Teams, compliance tools, and information protection to schools and students. Learn more [here](#).

In addition, Governor Raimondo announced that the SBA has approved Rhode Island's request for disaster declaration. Rhode Island businesses will now be able to access funds up to \$2 million per business to help them meet their operating expenses. Applicants may apply online, receive additional disaster assistance information and download applications at <https://disasterloan.sba.gov/ela>. Applicants may also call SBA's Customer Service Center at (800) 659-2955 or email [disastercustomerservice@sba.gov](mailto:disastercustomerservice@sba.gov) for more information on SBA disaster assistance. Individuals who are deaf or hard-of-hearing may call (800) 877-8339. Businesses can also call Commerce's small business hotline 521-HELP with any questions.

Dr. Alexander-Scott announced today that Rhode Island has two additional cases of COVID-19. One individual is a man in his 50s. He has a recent travel history to many different locations, including Germany and the United Kingdom. The second case is a woman in her 40s. RIDOH is

working to determine the origin of her illness. These individuals are both at home and are recovering. Rhode Island's case count is now 23.

Additionally, Dr. Alexander-Scott announced today that all oral healthcare providers should suspend nonessential, non-urgent dental care for the next 21 days. This is in line with guidance from the American Dental Association. RIDOH will revisit this guidance in three weeks.

### Data updates

These numbers are also [available online](#).

- Number of Rhode Island COVID-19 positive (including presumptive positive) cases: 23
- Number of people who had negative test results at RIDOH's State Health Laboratories: 403
- Number of people for whom tests are pending: 305
- Number of people who are currently instructed to self-quarantine in Rhode Island: approximately 2,500

### Key messages for the public

- If you have traveled anywhere internationally in the last 14 days, self-quarantine for 14 days. That means do not go to work or school and stay at home.
- Avoid all crowded places, large events, and mass gatherings. This is social distancing. However, people should continue doing essential errands (such as going to the grocery store).
- Through March 30th, there will be no on-site food consumption for restaurants, bars, coffee shops, or other food establishments in Rhode Island. (Establishments with a food license can continue to conduct pick-up, drive-thru and delivery only.)
- Due to the closure of schools, free "Grab and Go" meals are available (March 16th - March 20th) for children throughout Rhode Island. More information is [available online](#).
- Whenever possible, avoid close personal contact with people in public. When greeting people avoid handshakes and hugs. [Additional guidance](#) is available from CDC.
- Although Rhode Island has the testing capacity it needs, people without symptoms should not be tested for COVID-19. Testing individuals with no symptoms is not recommended by CDC.
- People who think they have COVID-19 should call their healthcare provider. These people should not go directly to a healthcare facility without first calling a healthcare provider (unless they are experiencing a medical emergency). Healthcare providers have a dedicated number that they are then using to consult with RIDOH on potential COVID-19 cases.
- Early data suggest that older adults are twice as likely to experience serious COVID-19 illness. RIDOH is reiterating CDC's guidance for people older than 60 years of age:
  - Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
  - When greeting people avoid handshakes and hugs.
  - Be sure you have over-the-counter medicines and medical supplies (tissues, etc.) to treat fever and other symptoms. Most people will be able to recover from COVID-19 at home.

- Pay attention for potential COVID-19 symptoms including, fever, cough, and shortness of breath. If you feel like you are developing symptoms, call your doctor.
  - More information is [available from CDC](#).
- People with general, non-medical questions about COVID-19 can visit [www.health.ri.gov/covid](http://www.health.ri.gov/covid), write to [RIDOH.COVID19Questions@health.ri.gov](mailto:RIDOH.COVID19Questions@health.ri.gov), or call 401-222-8022. This is the COVID-19 Hotline that RIDOH has available to the public. The Hotline will be staffed this weekend from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm both Saturday and Sunday. (After hours people are being directed to call 211.)
- Everyone can help stop the spread of viruses in Rhode Island.
  - Get your flu shot, and make sure the people around you do the same.
  - Wash your hands often throughout the day. Use warm water and soap. If soap and water are not available, use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
  - Cough or sneeze into your elbow. Viruses can spread by coughing or sneezing on other people or into your hands.
  - Stay home from work or school if you are sick.
  - Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth. Germs spread this way.

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